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Petra Netuková
Faculty of Social Studies
Masaryk University

Rosůlek, Přemysl:

**POLITICKÝ SECESIONISMUS
A ETICKÉ TEORIE. ALLEN
BUCHANAN A JEHO KRITICI.**

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The organization of human society is a prominent question in the studies of philosophy, sociology, political science, international law etc. Approximately since the middle of the seventeenth century the sovereign (so called Westphalian) states have been constituting the basic units of political community division. Today there are around two hundred such entities around the world. In spite of the fact that they tend to be fairly precisely defined and are usually not of random or accidental formation we cannot assume they are necessarily perpetual and unchangeable. Even today we are confronted with the emergence of new states the birth of which often lies in secession from or dissolution of an original state.

Secession is no novelty in world politics, yet it is far from being systematically and fully researched. How can we exactly define this phenomenon, how can we approach it, what are the circumstances under which it occurs, what is its dynamism and when is it justifiable and when is it not? These questions and many more keep waiting to be satisfactorily answered, explored, examined and re-examined. In this context I welcome, especially in the Czech scholastic community, Přemysl Rosůlek's effort to contribute to this field of study.

In the introduction to his book, the author reveals that his work primarily deals with the research of secession, with the way it is reflected in Anglo-Saxon academic literature.

Mainly he focuses on the comparison of the three dominant normative (moral) theories of secession, the argumentation of which is based on the importance of ethical norms. These are remedial (just-cause) theories, national self-determination theories and plebiscitary (choice) theories. More specifically Rosůlek wants to examine the ethical dimension of Allen Buchanan's remedial right only theory of secession and confront it with two other sets of theories as well as with the political reality. The author asks: is the Buchanan remedial theory morally justifiable? This question is accompanied by two other inquiries. Which theory is morally justifiable? And, is it possible to put the moral tenets of the Buchanan remedial theory above the norms of the national self-determination and plebiscitary theories? The first inquiry concentrates on the ethical principles of all three sets of theories. The second one deals with their minimal realism, with their ability to face political practice. The definition of the book's objectives is followed by the thorough outline of the structure of the publication and the basic points of the research design. Furthermore, a methodological approach to the research is presented in the final part of the introduction. Rosůlek chooses the *hermeneutischer Zirkel* as the suitable method for comprehending secession in its complexity.

The first part of the book is concerned with the contextualization of the word 'secession'. The author tries to uncover a true meaning of the term and to find the exact criteria for its usage. He addresses other related phenomena, e.g. self-determination, separatism, irredentism, exclusion, expulsion and so on, and puts them in contrast to or in accordance with secession. I deeply praise the author's effort to evade the terminological blurriness which unfortunately often accompanies this topic. Nevertheless, I must bring up here two slight reservations. As far as the conceptualisation of exclusion and expulsion is concerned,

I would welcome more precise and more comprehensible elaboration. (Two Czech words – *vypuzení* and *vyločení* – and one loanword – *exluze* – are used.) I have also noticed that the terms separatism (*separatismus*) and separation (*separace*) are used interchangeably. This I consider inconsistent and unclear. No explanation is offered. Apart from the treatise on terminology, the typology of secession is presented in the first part of the volume.

In the second part the author introduces the principal explanatory theories of secession. He addresses the main paradigms which try to uncover the regularities behind the studied phenomenon, the paradigms which attempt to explain the causes, dynamism and internal logic of secession. This knowledge, together with the findings included in the first part of the book, allows the author to proceed with a detailed definition of secession and with the specification of the criteria for the comparison of Buchanan's theory with the national self-determination theories and plebiscitary (choice) theories. These criteria are: (1) legitimacy of the (anti-) secessionist axiom, (2) legitimacy of the right to secede (including constitutional rights), (3) legitimacy of territorial dimension, (4) international law ethics and (5) state recognition ethics.

The third part of the volume can be viewed as the core of the research. It is made up of three chapters which correspond to the number of studied normative theories. The structure of all the chapters is analogical. Firstly, the theories are generally introduced, their chief arguments are examined and their most important advocates are presented. Then the five aforementioned criteria are applied. The analyses of self-determination theories and plebiscitary (choice) theories are supplemented with the treatise on Buchanan's view of the concurrent theory arguments as well as with the treatise on critics of the Buchanan's assumptions from the concurrent theories perspectives.

The forth part of the book, called 'Evaluation and analyses of normative theories with special attention paid to Allen Buchanan', place all of the three theories in comparative perspective mainly with consideration for the ethical arguments they are built on. At the same time Rosůlek confronts the theories with the political reality of the 1980s, the 1990s and the beginning of the new millennium. This treatise leads the author to the conclusion of his work. Based on his research and observations he states he does not consider the principal premises of Buchanan's remedial theory to be morally justifiable. The same goes for the other two concerned theories since neither of the studied theories give any universal ethical guidance in the complex solution of the morality of secession. According to the author, the theories are not altogether wrong; they can inspire and frame the discussion on the studied topic. Similarly, he notes that all three theories are deficient in respect to their geographical range inasmuch as they are focused on the liberal-democratic world despite the fact that the biggest potential for secession is found beyond its limits.

From my standpoint, the Přemysl Rosůlek book is definitively a valuable contribution to the study of secession. In spite of that I have some reservations about the book and the research itself, even though these reservations are not plentiful and are mainly of minor importance. As for the goals of the volume I praise the author's ability to confront the theories and the political reality. This effort is by all means worthy and the confrontation itself is very informative indeed. Similarly, I considered the comparison of the three theories very well drawn, highly instructive in content and well structured since the clear criteria for comparison are set. Unfortunately, it is exactly such criteria I miss when the ethical principles are assessed. I am aware that this is a nor-

mative part of the research but I would still welcome more exact and definite standards by which the moral justifiability could be judged and measured. In my opinion this is the biggest shortcoming of the research.

My other comments are rather technical. The amount and extent of footnotes I find disruptive. They are more than plentiful, often very long and the book is sometimes quite hard to read. In several instances (mainly in the first and the last chapter) the footnote goes over half the page (p. 22, 23, 24, 25, 27, 28, 34, 35, 119, 123, 127, 128, 130, 131). The volume is not too long, so I think some of the information placed in the footnotes could have been included into the main text. Next some quotations are translated into Czech without the English original (e.g. p. 55) and some are left only in English (e.g. p. 24, footnote n. 30, p. 24–25 footnote n. 36). This can be problematic to those who do not have a mastery of English.

All in all, I do believe the strengths of the book outweigh its weaknesses. I have no doubts about the author's deep knowledge of the subject. He covers an impressive amount of sources and he gives the reader thorough insight into secession in its complexity, despite its intricacy. Rosůlek's language is interesting and pleasant to read which does not contradict my reservation about the multitude of footnotes. The structure of the work is clearly outlined and, more importantly, observed. I have already pointed out the relevance and appeal of the topic. I would like to stress that the volume is accompanied by a synoptic index at the end and contains very illustrative and beautifully prepared graphs, tables, maps, pictorial summaries etc. All of these are a great help to readers in becoming well acquainted with the studied phenomena.